A SMALL GUIDE

TO

THE PRINCIPLES OF HOMŒOPATHIC PRESCRIBING

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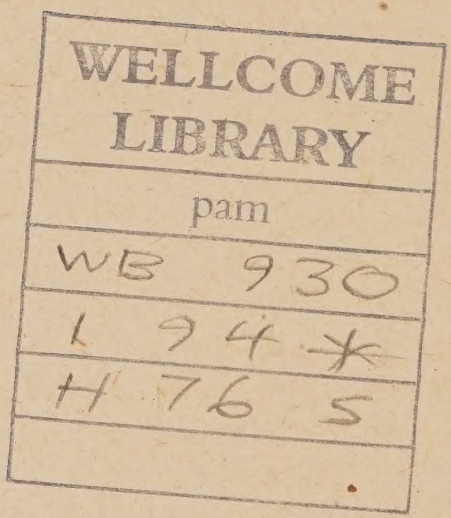
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THE HISTORY OF HOMŒOPATHY

HOMŒOPATHY is a method of medical treatment, with its fully accredited hospitals all over the world. Its Founder was Christian Samuel Hahnemann, a Saxon doctor born in 1755.[1]

In addition to his other accomplishments as a linguist and translator of medical works from the English, French, Italian, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic and Spanish, he was also a distinguished chemist (the author of a comprehensive Apothecaries' Lexicon) and a physician of note, before he discovered the value of the " law of similars " which lies at the back of his method of selecting medicines.

After his experience with this method, so great was Hahnemann's satisfaction at being able to cure cases which it had previously seemed impossible to benefit (especially if he desired to do so without, at the same time, in some direction doing harm) that he hoped for its universal adoption.

[1] Vide *Life and Work of Samuel Hahnemann :* by Dr. Richard Haehl (Homœopathic Publishing Co.) and *Life of Christian Samuel Hahnemann :* by Rosa Waugh Hobhouse (Daniel & Co.).

Hahnemann was no man of one idea, out of all proportion to the scheme of things to which it belonged. The elimination of the cause of disease, the abandonment of wrong ways of living and medicinal treatment with appropriate accessory means, baths, exercise, rest, frictions, etc., all found a place in his philosophy and practice. He further recognized that there were " emotional diseases originating in the mind ", which could be " transferred in health of both mind and body, by psychical means ".

In his life-time, though his following was not numerically large, his method of selecting and preparing medicines obtained adherents drawn from the medical profession in France, Germany, Belgium, England, Italy, Russia, Spain, and the United States. Of him it has recently been said: "Now, at last, his dicta are appealing to the more independent thinkers in medicine, although the limits of his teachings and suggestions are by no means reached, even in our day of scientific research. Hahnemann has always been, not only up to date, but before date; and this still obtains."

THE UNDERLYING LAW

THE "law of similars" upon which the selection of medicines is based in homœopathic practice was arrived at by the discovery that Cinchona Bark (from which quinine is derived) produces in persons sensitive to the drug the symptoms of malaria as well as the power to cure that disease. This led Hahnemann to test or "prove" a large number of medicinal substances on himself and other volunteers. The experiments were carried out with scrupulous care. As a result the principle "what can cause, can cure" was established in every instance where the drug was tested on the healthy in substantial dosage and used in fine doses for sick persons whose symptoms corresponded to those the drug could provoke.

The network of symptoms which any medicinal substance could *cause* was called "the drug picture"—the totality of the symptoms in any case

of illness " the disease picture ". When these can be most closely matched, the medicine in fine specially prepared dosage is called " homœopathic ", and the best results are to be expected, other conditions being observed.

A valuable instance on the applicability of this law is to be found in *What shall be our attitude to Homœopathy ?*[1]

" The action of *Sulphur* on the skin is not questioned. Provings on healthy human beings as well as experiences with chronic sulphur poisoning show that high doses of the drug taken internally—cause skin abscess, eruptions and furunculosis. It follows that the law of similars has been adhered to in the homœopathic sense, when we treat furunculosis, a common and stubborn disease, with small doses of *Sulphur*, a practice recommended long ago by homœopathy. . . . An experiment with a number of such cases of furunculosis treated with infinitesimally small doses of *Sulphur* is then described, followed by the statement : ' All in all thirty-four cases of furunculosis were treated in this manner and all were cured.' "

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING

In the Science and Art of Healing, according to any particular method, as in other sciences and arts, there must be those who are beginners. For all such, to whatever category they belong, this small work has been written.

[1] Dr. August Bier, Privicouncil Professor at Berlin.

The frequent and too often casual recourse to drugs such as Aspirin, Alcohol, Purgatives and Quinine, which is practised in countless households for ailments such as neuralgia, dyspepsia, is common knowledge. These medicines, moreover, are taken in material, i.e. substantial, doses, and are therefore capable of doing positive harm. It is imperative, therefore, that the heads of families and institutions generally, should be initiated into the safer and surer ways of treating these common maladies with remedies homœopathically selected and prepared in the fine dosage of the " potencies ".

The use even of these requires precise understanding. The prophylactic uses of medicines in Homœopathy should also be given adequate trial during epidemics. *Aconite* or *Pulsatilla* may be given against measles ; *Belladonna* against scarlet fever and *Eupatorium* or *Baptisia* against influenza. Even when persons, who have taken remedies as preventives against infections, succumb, it has been observed that the attack is frequently of a modified character. Any remedy which through long experience has been found to bear a specific relation to any given disease can be used as a prophylactic. *Baptisia*, for example, has been called " almost a specific " for influenza and typhoid, producing fortification in the blood against the germ of the latter in the form of agglutinin.

It is urged that in every serious case of illness whether acute or chronic a physician should be consulted.

A short Bibliography of standard works is added (see page 21).

TAKING THE CASE

LET the patients talk freely and describe even the seemingly unimportant particulars of their condition. To the homœopathic prescriber every fragment of the symptom-picture, as the sum of the symptoms is called, may prove of the utmost importance. For example, two persons suffering from rheumatism may both state that on first moving their pain is especially marked. One may add that "after continuing to move about the pain is eased"—the other that the more he moves the worse the pain becomes, "but rest eases it".

Eased by movement leads one to contemplate *Rhus tox.* as a remedy.

Eased by rest leads one to contemplate *Bryonia* as a remedy.[1]

The patient should also be encouraged to refer to any previous illness, anxiety or accident. For instance, if suffering from neuralgia or rheumatism, or both, he may reveal the story of a serious fall even many years previously. One of the traumatic, i.e. "injury", remedies will then probably need to find a place in the treatment, such as *Arnica* (which

[1] When using *Rhus* or *Bryonia*, for the above conditions, we are applying the "law of similars", because *Rhus*, in substantial and continued doses, causes pains which are eased by movement, and when given in potency cures the same, provided other indications are sufficient. On the other hand *Bryonia* in substantial doses has been found to cause pains which are eased by keeping still, and, with the same proviso, has cured the same.

relates to bruised muscle),[1] *Ruta* (relating to injuries to bone),[2] or *Hypericum* (which has curative virtues for injured bundles of nerves). This is an instance of prescribing according to a contributory cause, as also when *Dulcamara* is chosen as a remedy for various ailments such as diarrhœa, chill, or rheumatism when due to damp.

FINDING THE REMEDY

WHEN a number of symptoms appear in the case, select that medicine in the Materia Medica which, by its various symptoms (or indications) matches the largest number of those in the patient and especially includes the *distinctive or peculiar symptoms.* For example, if the patient, among other things, says that although usually cheerful and vigorous he is :

1. Suffering from lack of energy, with depression.
2. Has a sense of weight in the head.
3. Cannot easily remember things.
4. Has an annoying tendency to catch colds.
5. Has never been the same since having whooping-cough (or some other illness).

we shall think of such remedies as *Arsenicum* or

[1] Persons disposed to Erysipelas should substitute *Hamamelis* for *Arnica* for like conditions. Forms of tiredness and exhaustion due to physical or physiological causes amount to "gradual injury" and all heavy and bruised sensations resulting therefrom may indicate *Arnica* internally.

[2] A comparison of *Ruta,* which is useful when bones have actually sustained injury, with *Eupatorium perf.,* which covers the symptoms of "Bones feel as if bruised" as sometimes experienced in influenza, offers an interesting example of a subtle yet important distinction in symptomatology.

Kali phos. But on seeking further we shall find a closer match to the above set of symptoms, especially *the distinctive one in five,* under *Carbo vegetabilis.*[1] This remedy meets the condition of lowered vitality (often due to debilitating illness), and sub-normal temperature which may become " collapse " in a way corresponding to that in which *Aconite* relates to the plethoric condition, and high temperature which constitutes " fever ".

CLINICAL GROUPINGS OF REMEDIES

AFTER a long experience of choosing medicines to match the symptoms of the individual patient, remedies have become grouped by homœopathic practitioners as being appropriate for given conditions which, broadly speaking, recur in given diseases. They have further been proved to be related specially to age, sex, or mental temperaments. This is mentioned here so that the beginner may be aware of the importance of such " indications ".

For example *Ignatia*—a great remedy for conditions due to acute grief or strain—has been called the feminine of *Nux vom.* (which applies especially to that chronic condition of strain in the thin, spare, dark, active type, due to modern civilization).

[1] Indications are usually arranged under the various parts (localities) of the body such as " head ", " eyes ", " mouth ", " extremities ", and also under the various functional systems, " respiratory ", " nervous ", etc. In view of this, when prescribing for teeth, eyes and so on, the sections relating to the locality in question should be consulted, *always remembering the patient as a whole must be considered.*

Pulsatilla is another remedy which has been found of special service to women and children of a given temperament (the affectionate type, cheerful in health, but swiftly moved to tears) while *Cimicifuga* has been found to cover almost all the symptoms of the climateric. *Arsenicum* has proved of value in the relief of anguish especially due to the anticipation of, or actual approach of, death. *Chamomilla*, on the other hand, has been called " the fairy godmother " of the nursery being especially suited to the child who, to use Hahnemann's inimitable description : " Makes itself stiff and bends backwards, stamps with its feet on the nurse's arm, cries in an uncontrollable way, wants this thing and the other and when given anything he refuses it or knocks it away from him." Yet although this is a *typical* " chamomilla picture " the remedy will bring cure to children for states of restlessness, etc., unaccompanied by temper.

In Clarke's *Dictionary of Materia Medica* we find that " the *absence* of any particular characteristic of a drug is no *contra-indication* to its use provided other indications are sufficiently pronounced ".

THE MEDICINES

THE remedies used by the homœopath are originally obtained from all the kingdoms of nature. They include any substance which before preparation may be found to adversely affect health, and which, when suitably prepared and administered, will produce beneficial effect.

It is to his methods of preparing medicines that the homœopath looks for a safer and surer use of them. The fineness of the dosage resulting creates an additional demand for the utmost genuineness and purity of the crude substance from which the "potencies are made, and great care has to be exercised in order that exactly the same drug as used by the "provers" (that is, those who tabulated the poisoning symptoms) is produced and utilized. As an example, ordinary tincture of Aconite is made from dried Aconite root, whereas the *Aconite* used as the starting point by the homœopath is, in effect, the preserved fresh juice taken from the flowering plant excluding the root.

Hahnemann in his *Materia Medica Pura* gives detailed instructions both as regards selection and preparation which must be most exactly observed if good results are to be expected and the prescription a success. Hence it will be seen that the chemist, who knows enough to care, only makes or obtains his materials from a reliable source.

THE STRENGTH OF THE REMEDY

THE remedies are prepared from the Mother Tinctures (marked thus ϕ) and made up in various strengths called "potencies" or dilutions. These are according to either the decimal or centesimal scale of reduction. We deal with the latter alone here.

The Mother Tinctures are the initial strong tinctures made by preserving plant juices or

dissolving the soluble constituents of barks, roots, seeds, resins or gums, etc: (Full instructions for their production may be had from the American, German or British Homœopathic Pharmacopœias.)

The potencies in the centesimal scale are made by diluting one part of the Mother Tincture with ninety-nine parts of rectified spirit of the appropriate strength. This produces the first centesimal potency (1*c*). One part of this first potency is added to ninety-nine parts of diluent producing the second centesimal potency and this process is repeated until the desired attenuation is reached, each potency being succussed in the ascending scale.[1]

Insoluble substances are potentized by first "triturating" or grinding with sugar of milk, one part to ninety-nine being used to produce the first centesimal potency. When one part in a million parts has been reached, that is by the 3*c* trituration, the next and subsequent dilutions are made by first dissolving the final trituration in water and continuing as for solubles to obtain 4*c* onwards.

In the centesimal scale 1*c*=1/100 ; 2*c*=1/10,000 ; 3*c*=1/1,000,000, the fraction ascending by the addition of two "o's" for each higher numeral before the *c*.

Sometimes the potencies in the centesimal scale are written without the letter *c* affixed—thus 1, 2 or 3, etc. (the centesimal understood). This is because Hahnemann started with this scale and used no other. The use of the decimal scale was adopted

[1] See Hahnemann's Materia Medica Pura, Vol. I, page 90. The description given under the heading of *Arnica* holds good for all succulent plants.

later, and the numeral *x* put after the figure to distinguish it from the centesimal.

No one unacquainted with all the implications of producing potencies in responsible practice, should attempt to make their own " dilutions " : *this is the wholetime vocation of the expert pharmacist.* The foregoing explanations are merely given so that all shall know it is an exact " infinitesimal " which is put to such amazing purpose, and not a haphazard dilution of indefinite strength.

THE FORM IN WHICH TO OBTAIN REMEDIES

THESE are made up in various convenient forms. It is best for internal use to purchase only the solid forms and these in potencies of either the 3rd, 6th or 12th centesimal strength, which may be regarded as safe for the beginner. For external application the tinctures are useful diluted with water for compresses, etc., as when *Calendula* or *Hypericum* are used for wounds, or *Urtica urens* is applied for burns,[1] or as liniments as when *Rhus* is used for strains. All medicines should be bought from a reliable homœopathic chemist. This cannot be too strongly emphasized. It is vitally important if success is to be obtained. Those travelling in parts where no such chemist is established should furnish themselves with a medicine case, and remember to keep them away from light, heat, and strongly smelling things such as camphor, etc.

[1] Use five drops of the mother tincture to a tablespoonful of water.

THE DOSE AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

In potencies from 3c upwards the usual dose is one disc, two tablets, or three pilules.[1] These doses are appropriate to both adult and child and are best given dry under the tongue, the mouth being first rinsed with water, especially if a tooth-paste has just been used, as these often contain some strong medicament.

The medicine is usually given on retiring or rising; if during the day, preferably apart from food. Owing to the delicacy of the dosage it is by some advised that during treatment powerful articles of diet such as coffee, alcohol, and vinegar should be abstained from. This is especially true if the remedy be prepared from the same substance "in potency". *Natrum mur.* for example is potentized salt—it is a great remedy (provided the general indications are sufficient) for anæmia, which an excess of salt can cause. *Natrum mur.* has been called the *pons asinorum* of Homœopathy. It will be obvious that the minimum of salt can be allowed during its use or even total abstention advised. With the higher or highest potencies this counsel becomes decreasingly important as these are more penetrating, deeper acting and more independent of material interference.[2]

[1] Some practitioners prefer to give rather less than the above dose to an infant or *small* child (as would be necessary in potencies under the 3c). If dividing, do not handle the disc, crush in paper and give part.

[2] It is this *penetrating* nature of the highest potencies that leads the homœopath in cases of an extreme condition to sometimes prefer very low potencies. Such precautions the physician using homœopathic remedies imposes upon himself, as the result of his profound insight preferring in the final stages of chronic disorders to palliate rather than attempt cure, and especially where tissue changes have already occurred.

THE FREQUENCY OF THE DOSE

MEDICINES are given more frequently in acute conditions, every two hours or oftener, and less frequently in chronic illness, perhaps only three or four doses a week. This applies to acute conditions of minor ailments as well as to the acute phases of serious diseases. *In every serious case of illness or chronic disorder a physician should be consulted.* It must also be noted that the higher potencies may be less frequently given, the lower more frequently. With both it is better to repeat too late than too soon. This is because the *vis medicatrix naturae* or " healing life of nature " is always endeavouring to cure and whilst often needing aid, it is better that it should be under rather than over stimulated to further effort.

The frequency of dose may further be partly determined by the duration of action peculiar to the medicine. The duration of action of a medicine refers to *the length of time a single dose can remain at work in the body* and not to the speed with which its effects are seen. Medicines of a very brief action such as *Aconite* or *Belladonna* may be repeated oftener than those of a long duration as *Graphites* or *Sulphur* which are cumulative.

As the length of action of any given remedy depends not only upon its own nature, but also upon the nature of the disease and the response of the individual patient, having regard to the potency used, the observed maximum time action can only be stated, and has been recorded by close observers over a wide number of cases. These observations

are recorded in T. Gibson Miller's *Relationships of Remedies* and Dr. Clarke's *Clinical Repertory*. Thus the practised prescriber will enjoy the freedom which experience brings.

HOW TO REGULATE THE DOSE

MAKE it a rule to watch the effect of each dose. Accustom yourself to act as follows :

1. When there is no apparent change within reasonable time, repeat the dose.[1]
2. When improvement begins, increase the interval between the doses ; if improvement is marked, postpone giving another dose until improvement flags or stops.
3. If the symptoms are somewhat increased, do not repeat the dose but watch for this " aggravation " to pass over to improvement. When improvement sets in act as in 2 above.
4. If new symptoms are awakened (perhaps, previously suppressed tendencies causing some transient disturbance) act as in 3 above.
5. If an altogether new condition presents itself such as " debility " after " simple fever ", select a new remedy for the new condition.

[1] In acute illness every two to three hours. In chronic disorders every two or three days (see paragraph 1, previous section).

A golden saying in Homœopathy is: "This medicine is doing good; take less of it." In troubles of long standing it is important not to stop altogether too soon. On the other hand Hahnemann taught that a too prolonged taking of medicine, even in the fine dosage of the potencies, could do harm. The above suggestions should prevent even a beginner from falling into either error.

THE DIFFERENT ACTIONS OF MEDICINES

ALL medicines however prescribed tend to reveal two actions, the first, or direct action, the second, or indirect action. The second action is regarded by the homœopath as the more important since it is the medicine's "last word".

Given in material doses the first action of a drug (chosen according to the "law of contraries", as *Opium* for pain) leads to the desired decrease of the symptoms, *the second action to unwanted effects* though these are not always shown on the surface.

Given in potency (and chosen according to the "law of similars" as *Cinchona* for malaria) the first action of a medicine is to increase the symptoms, though this increase does not always appear on the surface, and even sometimes as previously stated to bring about other disturbances. *But when this passes over into the second action, it tends towards recovery and cure.*

When medicines are prescribed in potency they are applicable to cases of an opposite kind to those to which they apply when administered in material

doses.[1] For example, *Nux vomica* is used in material doses by orthodox medicine, to stimulate the nervous system; homœopathically prescribed in potency (i.e. in fine dosage) it is used to calm over-stimulated nerves. Again *Opium* is used in material doses to benumb the nerves, i.e. to deaden pain: the homœopath using it "in potency" obtains from *Opium* the blessing of torpor aroused to normal activity.

CONCLUSION

HOW HOMŒOPATHIC REMEDIES ACT

If one bears in mind that a homœopathically prepared medicine does not act in any way comparable with the action of a drug in the concentrated form, but that it has in some subtle way the power to give the system the incentive to bring itself back to normal, then it is obvious that even a single dose may be sufficient, on occasions, to clear up even a severe illness. This is indeed sometimes the case, but more usually so with the higher potencies such as 30*c* and above, which require great understanding.

It is in some cases necessary to vary the order of strengths given, i.e. to begin with the lower potencies and through successive doses to climb to the higher, but these specialized methods are best left to those who have the confidence of great experience and the lower potencies from 3*c* to 12*c* used only by beginners.

[1] This difference resulting from the use of drugs given in material doses and the effect of the same drugs given in the potencies is due to the operation of the Arndt-Schultz Law, by which:—"Small doses encourage life activity; large doses impede life activity; very large doses destroy life activity."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following books are useful to all beginners in Homœopathy:

	£	s.	d.
Clarke's *Prescriber*		10	6
Barker's *Miracles of Healing*		10	6
Hobhouse's *Life of Hahnemann*		7	6
Wheeler's *Case for Homœopathy*		1	3

For those beginning the practice of Homœopathy in the home :

Ruddock's *Vade Mecum*		12	6
Johnson's *Family Guide*		18	6
Clarke's *Dictionary of Domestic Medicine*		8	6

Those who wish to become more deeply acquainted :

Hahnemann's *Organon of Medicine*	1	2	0
Allen's *Keynotes*		18	6
Nash's *Leaders in Therapeutics*	1	2	0
Kent's *Lectures on Homœopathic Philosophy*	1	1	0
Roberts's *The Principles and Art of Cure by Homœopathy*		17	6
Tyler's *Homœopathic Drug Pictures*	2	10	0

A complete catalogue will be sent on application to The Homœopathic Publishing Co., Ltd., 24 St. George Street, Hanover Square, London, W.1.

NOTES